Dredging operation by foreign dredgers

737. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether dredgers with foreign flags are allowed to dredge in the Indian ports;

(b) if so, whether any application for permission for dredging by the dredger with foreign flag is rejected by the DG, Shipping in 1997, 1998 and 1999, and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) An application made by M/s Crown Maritime Ltd., Mumbai for charter permission for dredger 'Pioneer C-10' in the month of August, 1999 was rejected by DG (Shipping). The matter is under investigation.

Lack of proper security arrangements at Ports

738. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no proper security provision at all the ports;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to security reasons series of murders happened in JNPT Mumbai including that of a women; and

(c) if so, the details of the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) A man was murdered on 31.12.1994 and in a double murder incident, two women were killed on 14.6.1998 in Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust township.

(c) In the murder which took place on 31.12.1994, the culprits were apprehended and charge-sheeted by the police. In the case of double murder, the investigations are pending with Crime Branch, Navi Mumbai and the culprits are yet to be arrested. The law and

order being a state subject, the port authorities have taken up the matter with the Government of Maharashtra State.

Commercial Cargo Service between India-Bangladesh

739. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a commercial cargo service is contemplated on the Brahamputra river between India and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposal has been agreed to by both the Governments; and

(d) if so, when the service is likely to start?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The commercial cargo service is already operating between Calcutta, Haldia, Karimganj & Pandu on the Indian side and Narayanganj, Khulna, Mongla and Sirajganj on the Bangladesh side. For this service, a Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between India and Bangladesh already exists, which has been extended recently for a further period of two years from 4.10.1999 to 3.10.2001.

(d) Does not arise.

Procurement of Ship Engines by Andaman Administration

740. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andaman Administration is investing Rs. 160 crores to buy engines to power its ships;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any particular make of engine has been preferred; and

(d) if so, the name of the manufacturer and the reasons for selection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Administration have